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(47)

A SERMON

PREACHED

On the Fifth of *November*,
MDC LXX III.

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A SERMON, PREACHED On the Fifth of *November*, 1673.

PSAL. LXIV. 9, 10.

And all men ſhall fear, and ſhall declare the work of God; for they ſhall wiſely conſider of his doing.

The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and ſhall truſt in him; and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.

IF we ſhould ſearch about for a Caſe parallel to that which we do now commemorate, we ſhould perhaps, hardly find one more patly ſuch, then is that which is implied in this Pſalm: and if we would know the Duties incumbent on us in reference to ſuch an Occaſion, we could ſcarce better learn them other-where then in our Text.

With attention peruſing the Pſalm, we may therein

obſerve, That its great Authour was apprehenſive of a deſperate Plot by a confederacy of wicked and ſpitefull enemies, with great craft and ſecrecy, contrived againſt his ſafety. *They*, ſaith he, *encourage themſelves in an evil* Verſ. 5. *matter; they commune of laying ſnares privily; they ſay, Who ſhall ſee them?* That for preventing the blow threatned by this deſign, (whereof he had ſome glimpſe, or ſome preſumption, grounded upon the knowledge of their implacable and active malice) he doth implore Divine protection: *Hide me*, ſaith he, *from the ſecret counſel of* Verſ. 2. *the wicked, from the inſurrection of the workers of iniquity.* That he did confide in God's Mercy and Juſtice for the ſeaſonable defeating, for the fit avenging their machination: *God*, ſaith he, *ſhall ſhoot at them with an arrow;* Verſ. 7. *ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded.* That they ſhould themſelves become the detectours of their crime, and the inſtruments of the exemplary puniſhment due thereunto: *They* (added he) Verſ. 8. *ſhall make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves: all that ſee them, ſhall flee away.*

Such was the Caſe; the which unto what paſſage in the hiſtory it doth relate, or whether it belongeth to any we have recorded, it may not be eaſie to determine. Expoſitours commonly do refer it to the deſigns of *Saul* upon *David*'s life. But this ſeeming purely conjecture, not founded upon any expreſs words, or pregnant intimations in the text, I ſhall leave that inquiry in its own uncertainty. It ſufficeth to make good its pertinency, that there was ſuch a miſchievous Conſpiracy, deeply projected againſt *David*; (a very great perſonage, in whoſe ſafety the publick ſtate of God's people was principally concerned; he being then King of *Iſrael*, at leaſt in deſignation, and therefore in the precedent Pſalm, Pſal. 63. 11. endited in *Saul*'s time, is ſo ſtyled;) from the peril whereof

of he by the ſpecial Providence of God was reſcued, with the notable diſappointment and grievous confuſion of thoſe who managed it. The which Caſe (at leaſt in kind, if not in degree) beareth a plain reſemblance to that which lieth before us.

And the Duties which upon that occaſion are ſignified to concern people then, do no leſs now ſort to us; the which, as they lie couched in our Text, are theſe: 1. *wiſely* to *conſider God's doing*; 2. to *fear*; 3. to *declare God's work*; 4. to *be glad in the Lord*; 5. to *truſt in God*; 6. to *glory*. Of which the Firſt Three are repreſented as more generally concerning men; the others as appertaining more peculiarly to righteous and upright perſons.

Theſe Duties it ſhall be my endeavour ſomewhat to explain and preſs, in a manner applicable to the preſent caſe. I call them Duties; and to warrant the doing ſo, it is requiſite to conſider, that all theſe particulars may be underſtood in a double manner, either as declarative of event, or as directive of practice upon ſuch emergencies.

When God doth ſo interpoſe his hand, as ſignally to check and confound miſchievous enterpriſes; it will be apt to ſtir up in the minds of men an apprehenſion of God's ſpecial Providence, to ſtrike into their hearts a dread of his Power and Juſtice, to wring from their mouths ſutable declarations and acknowledgments; and particularly then good men will be affected with pious joy, they will be incouraged to confide in God, they will be moved to glory, or to expreſs a triumphant ſatisfaction in God's proceedings. Theſe events naturally do reſult from ſuch providential occurrences; for production of theſe events, ſuch occurrences are purpoſely deſigned; and accordingly (where men are not by pro-

ſane opinions or affections much indiſpoſed) they do commonly follow.

But yet they are not propoſed ſimply as Events, but alſo as matters of Duty: for men are obliged readily to admit ſuch impreſſions upon their minds, hearts, and lives, from the ſpecial works of Providence: they are bound, not to croſs thoſe natural tendencies, not to fruſtrate thoſe wiſe intents of God, aiming at the production of ſuch good diſpoſitions and good practices: whence if thoſe effects do not ariſe, as often notoriouſly they do not in ſome perſons, men thereby do incurre much guilt and blame.

It is indeed ordinary to repreſent matter of duty in this way, expreſſing thoſe practices conſequent in effect, which in obligation ſhould follow, according to God's purpoſe, and the nature of cauſes ordered by him. As when, for inſtance, God in the Law had preſcribed Duty, and threatned ſore puniſhment on the diſobedient, it is ſubjoyned, *And all the people ſhall hear, and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly:* the meaning is, that ſuch exemplary puniſhment is in its nature apt, and its deſign tendeth to produce ſuch effects, although not ever, queſtionleſs with due ſucceſs, ſo as to prevent all tranſgreſſion of thoſe Laws. So alſo, *When* (ſaith the Prophet) *thy judgments are in the land, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs:* the ſenſe is, that Divine judgments in themſelves are inſtructive of Duty, it is their drift to inform men therein, and men ought to learn that leſſon from them; although in effect divers there be, whom no judgments can make wiſer or better; ſuch as thoſe of whom in the ſame Prophet it is ſaid, *The people turneth not unto him that ſmiteth them*; and in another, *In vain have I ſmitten your children, they received no cor-*

Deut. 17. 13. & 13. 11. & 19. 20.

Iſa. 26. 9.

Iſa. 9. 13. Jer. 2. 30. & 5. 3. Neh. 9. 29.

correction. As therefore frequently otherwhere, so also here, this kind of expression may be taken chiefly to import Duty. To begin then with the First of these Duties.

I. We are upon such occasions obliged *wisely to consider* (or, as the *Greek* rendereth it, συνιέναι, *to understand*, or, *to perceive*, as our Old Translation hath it) *God's doing.* This I put in the first place, as previous in nature, and influential upon the rest: whence (although in the *Hebrew* it be knit to the rest, as they all are to one another, by the conjunctive parcicle *ve*, *and*, yet) we do translate it causally, *for they shall wisely consider, for they shall perceive*; because indeed without duly considering, and rightly understanding such occurrences to proceed from God, none of the other acts can, or will be performed: attentive consideration is needful to beget knowledge and persuasion, these to breed affection and practice.

ומעשהו השבילו

συνῆκον τὰ ποιήματα.

There are many who, in such cases, are no-wise apprehensive of God's special Providence, or affected with it; because they do not consider, or do not consider wisely and intelligently.

Some are very inobservant and careless in regard to things of this nature; so drowzy and heedless, as not to attend to what-ever passeth, or to mind what God acteth in the world: such as those of whom the Prophet saith, *The Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands:* that is, their minds are so amused by wanton divertisements, their hearts are so immersed in sensual enjoyments, as no-wise to observe the most notable occurrences of Providence.

Isa. 5. 12. Psal. 28. 5. & 10. 4.

Others, (although they do ken and regard what is done

done, as matter of news, or ſtory, entertaining curioſity and talk; yet) out of ſloth or ſtupidity, do little conſider it, or ſtudy whence it ſpringeth; contenting themſelves with none, or with any ſuperficial account, which fancy or appearance ſuggeſteth: like beaſts, they do take in things obvious to their ſenſe, and perhaps ſtand gazing on them; but do not make any careful reflexion, or inquiry into their original cauſes and reaſons; taking (as a dog, when he biteth the ſtone flung at him, or as a child that is angry with the log he falleth on) what-ever appeareth next, to be the principal cauſe: ſuch as the Pſalmiſt again toucheth, when he ſaith, *A brutiſh man knoweth not, neither doth a fool underſtand this:* and as he doth acknowledg himſelf on one occaſion to have been; *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant; I was as a beaſt before thee.*

Pſal. 92. 6.

Pſal. 73. 22.

Others pretend to conſider much, and ſeem very inquiſitive; yet (being miſguided by vain prejudices, or foul affections) do not conſider wiſely, or well underſtand theſe matters; the reſult of their care and ſtudy about them being to father them on wrong cauſes, aſcribing them to the meer conduct and agency of viſible cauſes, hurried by a neceſſary ſwindge, or rolling on by a caſual fluctuation of things; not deſcrying God's hand in them, but profanely diſcarding and diſclaiming it: ſuch as thoſe in the Pſalms, who ſo reflected on Providence, as to ſay, *How doth God know? and, is there knowledge in the Moſt High? The Lord doth not ſee, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it:* ſuch as hath been the brood of *Epicurean* and profane Conſiderers in all times, who have earneſtly plodded, and ſtrained their wits, to exclude God from any inſpection or influence upon our affairs.

Pſal. 73. 11. Pſal. 94. 7. & 10. 11.

Some indeed there have been ſo very dull and ſtupid, or

or ſo perverſe and profane, as not to diſcern God's Hand, when it was *made bare*, *raiſed up*, and *ſtretched out* in the atchievement of moſt prodigious works; not to reade Providence, when ſet forth in the largeſt and faireſt print: ſuch as thoſe of whom 'tis ſaid in the Pſalm, * *Our fathers underſtood not thy wonders in Egypt*; and thoſe of whom 'tis obſerved in the Goſpel, *Though he had done ſo many miracles before them, yet they believed not:* ſuch as the mutinous people, who, although they beheld *the earth ſwallowing up* Corah *with his Complices, and a Fire from the Lord conſuming the men that offered Incenſe*; yet preſently did fall a-charging *Moſes* and *Aaron*, ſaying, *Ye have killed the People of the Lord.* No wonder then, if many do not perceive the ſame Hand, when it is wrapp'd up in a complication with inferiour cauſes; when it is not lifted up ſo high, or ſo far extended in miraculous performances.

Iſa. 52. 10. Exod. 14. 8. Deut. 26. 8. Iſa 26. 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee,* &c. * Pſal. 106. 7. Joh. 12. 37. Num. 16. 32. 35, 41.

The ſpecial Providence of God in events here effected or ordered by him, is indeed commonly not diſcernible without good judgment and great care; it is not commonly impreſſed upon events in characters ſo big and clear, as to be legible to every eye, or to any eye not endued with a ſharp perſpicacy, not applying an induſtrious heedfulneſs: the tracts thereof are too fine and ſubtil to be deſcried by a dimme ſight, with a tranſient glance, or upon a groſs veiw: it is ſeldome ſo very conſpicuous, that perſons incredulous, or any-wiſe indiſpoſed to admit it, can eaſily be convinced thereof, or conſtrained to acknowledg it: it is often (upon many accounts, from many cauſes) very obſcure, and not eaſily diſcernible to the moſt ſagacious, moſt watchful, moſt willing obſervers. For, the inſtruments of Providence being free agents, acting with unaccountable variety, nothing

nothing can happen, which may not be imputed to them, with ſome colourable pretence. Divine and humane influences are ſo twiſted and knit together, that it is hard to ſever them. The manner of Divine efficacy is ſo very ſoft and gentle, that we cannot eaſily trace its footſteps. God deſigneth not commonly to exert his hand in a notorious way, but often purpoſely doth conceal it. Whereas alſo it is not fit to charge upon God's ſpecial hand of Providence any event, wherein ſpecial ends of wiſedom or goodneſs do not ſhine; it is often hard to diſcover ſuch ends, which uſually are wrap'd in perplexities; becauſe God acteth variouſly, (according to the circumſtances of things, and the diſpoſition, capacity, or ſtate of objects) ſo as to doe the ſame thing for different ends, and different things for the ſame end: becauſe there are different ends, unto which Providence in various order and meaſure hath regard, which our ſhort and narrow proſpect cannot reach: becauſe God, in proſecution of his ends, is not wont to proceed in the moſt direct and compendious way; but windeth about in a large circuit, enfolding many concurrent and ſubordinate deſigns: becauſe the expediency of things to be permitted or performed, doth not conſiſt in ſingle acts or events, but in many conſpiring to one common end: becauſe we cannot apprehend the conſequences, nor ballance the conveniencies of things in order to good ends: becauſe we are apt to meaſure things by their congruity to our opinions, expectations, and affections: becauſe many proceedings of God depend upon grounds inacceſſible to our apprehenſion; ſuch as his own ſecret Decrees, the knowledge of mens thoughts, cloſe purpoſes, clandeſtine deſignes, true qualifications and merits; his preſcience of contingent events and what the reſult will be

be from the combination of numberleſs cauſes: becauſe ſometimes he doth act in methods of Wiſdom, and by rules of Juſtice, ſurpaſſing our capacity to know either from the finiteneſs of our nature, or the feebleneſs of our reaſon, or the meanneſs of our ſtate, and circumſtances here: becauſe alſo the Divine adminiſtration of affairs hath no compleat determination or final iſſue here; that being reſerved to the great day of reckoning and judgment. It is further alſo expedient, that many occurrences ſhould be puzzling to us, to quaſh our preſumption, to exerciſe our faith, to quicken our induſtry, to engage us upon adoring that Wiſedom which we cannot comprehend. Upon ſuch accounts, for ſuch cauſes, (which time will not give me leave to explain and exemplifie) the ſpecial Providence of God is often cloudy, is ſeldom ſo clear, that without great heed and conſideration we can perceive it. But however to do ſo is plainly our duty; and therefore poſſible.

For our Reaſon was not given us to be idle upon ſo important occaſions; or that we ſhould be as brute Spectatours of what God doeth. He, ſurely, in the Governance of his nobleſt creature here diſcovereth his Being, and diſplayeth his Attributes, we therefore carefully ſhould obſerve it. He thereby (and no otherwiſe in a publick way) doth continually *ſpeak*, and ſignifie to us his mind: and fit it is, that we his ſubjects ſhould hear, ſhould attend to the leaſt intimations of his pleaſure. To him thence glory ſhould accrue, the which who but we can render? and that we may render it, we muſt know the grounds of it. In fine, for the ſupport of God's Kingdom, for upholding the reverence due to his adminiſtration of Juſtice among us, it is requiſite, that by apparent diſpenſation of recompences, Duty ſhould Pſal. 50. 1. & 60. 6. & 62. 11.

be encouraged, and Diſobedience checked: very fooliſh therefore we muſt be, if we regard not ſuch diſpenſations.

So Reaſon dictateth, and Holy Scripture more plainly declareth our obligation to conſider, and perceive God's doings. To doe ſo is recommended to us as a ſingular point of wiſedom: *whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve theſe things, they ſhall underſtand the loving-kindneſs of the Lord.* Pſal 107. 43. Jer. 9. 24. *Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth. Who is wiſe? and he ſhall underſtand theſe things; prudent? and he ſhall know them. For the ways of the Lord are right,* &c. Hoſ. 14. 9. Pſal. 94. 8. We are vehemently provoked thereto: *Underſtand, ye brutiſh among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wiſe?* They are reproved for neglect and defailance, *who do not regard the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hand.* Pſal. 28. 5. & 92. 4. Iſa. 5. 12. The not diſcerning Providence, is reproached as a piece of ſhameful folly; *A brutiſh man knoweth not, neither doth a fool underſtand:* Pſal. 92. 6. (Iſa. 26. 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee.*) and of woful pravity; * *O ye hypocrites, ye can diſcern the face of the Skie; but how is it that ye cannot diſcern this time?* Luk. 12. 56. To contemplate and ſtudy Providence is the practice of Good men: *I will meditate on all thy works,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt, chiefly reſpecting works of this kind; and, *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein.* Matt. 16. 3. Pſal. 77. 12. & 103. 5. Pſal. 111. 2. It is a fit matter of Devotion, warranted by the practice of good men, to implore God's manifeſtation of his Juſtice and Power this way. *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, ſhew thy ſelf; lift up thy ſelf, thou Judge of the earth.* Pſal. 94. 1, 2. It is God's manner hereby to notifie himſelf: *The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth.* Pſal. 9. 16. He for this very purpoſe doth interpoſe his Hand, *that men may*

know

know that it is his Hand, and that the Lord hath done it; that (as it is in *Eſay*) *they may ſee, and know, and conſider, and underſtand together, that the Hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Iſrael hath created it.* He manageth things ſo, that men may be brought to know, may be induced to acknowledge his authority, and his equity in the management thereof; that *they may know, that he whoſe Name is Jehovah, is the moſt High over all the earth*; that *they may ſay, Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.* In fine, the knowledge of God's ſpecial Providence is frequently repreſented as a mean of nouriſhing our faith and hope in him, as a ground of thankfulneſs and praiſe to him, as an incentive of the beſt affections (of holy joy, and humble fear, and hearty love) toward him: wherefore we ought to ſeek it, and we may attain it.

Pſal. 109. 27
Iſa. 41. 20.
(Ezek. 7. 27.)

God thereby doth ſupport and encourage good men.

He doth thereby convince and confound ill men. *Pſal.* 9. 19, 20.

He thereby doth inſtruct all men. *Iſa* 26. 9.

Pſal. 59. 13. & 83. 18. & 67. 2.

Pſal. 58. 11.

There are conſequently ſome diſtinctive marks or characters, by which we may perceive God's Hand: and ſuch may theſe be which follow, (drawn from the ſpecial nature, manner, adjuncts, and conſequences of events:) upon which may be grounded Rules declarative of ſpecial Providence, ſuch as commonly will hold; although ſometimes they may admit exceptions, and ſhould be warily applied.

1. The wonderfull Strangeneſs of Events, compared with the ordinary courſe of things, or the natural influence of cauſes: when effects are performed by no viſible means; or by means diſproportionate, unſuitable, repugnant to the effect. Sometimes great exploits are atchieved, mighty forces are diſcomfited, huge ſtructures are demoliſhed, deſigns backed with all advantages of

wit and strength are confounded, none knows how, by no considerable means that appear; Nature rising up in arms against them; panick fears seising on the Abetters of them; dissensions and treacheries springing up among the Actors; sudden deaths snatching away the principal instruments of them. As, when *the stars in their courses fought against Sisera:* when the winds and skies became auxiliaries to *Theodosius: when the Lord thundered with a great thunder upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel: when the Lord made the host of Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, of horses, of a great host;* —— whence *they arose and fled:* when *the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another:* when *the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians* 185000 *men; and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses:* when the mighty power of *Antiochus* was, as it is said, to be *broken without hands*, and when, as it is foretold, *a stone cut out of the mountain without hands should break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold.* Such Events do speak God to be their cause, by his invisible efficacy supplying the defect of apparent means.

Judg. 5. 20. Aug. *de Civ. Dei*, 5. 26. 1 Sam. 7. 10. 2 Sam. 22. 14. 15. 2 King. 7. 6. Psal. 53. 5. & 48. 6. 2 Chron. 20. 23. 2 King. 19. 35. Dan. 8. 25. Dan. 2. 45.

So likewise, when by weak forces great feats are accomplished, and impotency triumpheth over might: when (as the Prophet saith) * *the captives of the mighty are taken away, and the prey of the terrible is delivered:* when *One man* (as is promised) *doth chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight:* when * a strippling, furnished onely with faith and a pebble, shall knock down a monstrous Giant, armed with a helmet of brass, and a coat of mail, with

Vid. Artabani *Orat. apud* Herod *Polymn. pag.* 246. Hom. Il. π' *vtr.* 688. *Isa. 49. 25. Josh. 23. 10. Lev. 26. 8. Deut. 32. 30. * 1 Sam. 17. 5. 40.

with a huge target, ſword and ſpear: when ſucceſſes arrive like thoſe recorded in Scripture, under the conduct of *Joſhua*, *Gideon*, *Jonathan*, *Aſa*, *Jehoſaphat*; wherein very ſmall forces, by uncouth means, did ſubdue formidable powers: This doth argue that God doth interpoſe; * *with whom* (as it is ſaid) *it is all one to ſave by many, or by few, and thoſe that have no power*; whoſe *power is perfected in weakneſs*; who *breaketh the arm of the wicked*, and *weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty*, and *delivereth the poor from him that is too ſtrong for him.*

Judg. 7. 7. 1 Sam. 14. 6. — 2 Chron. 14. 11. — & 20. 12, 17. * 2 Chron. 14. 11. 1 Sam 14. 6. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Job. 12. 21. & 38. 15. Pſal. 10. 15. & 37. 17. & 35. 10. (Pſal. 76. 5.) Hom. Od. ϕ. verſ. 11. 2 Sam. 51. 13.

Alſo, when great policy and craft do effect nothing, but are blaſted of themſelves, or baffled by ſimplicity; when cunningly-laid deſigns are ſoon thwarted and overturned: when moſt perſpicacious and profound counſellours are ſo blinded, or ſo infatuated, as to miſtake in plain caſes, to overſee things moſt obvious and palpable: when profane, malicious, ſubtil, treacherous Politicians (ſuch as *Abimelech*, *Achitophel*, *Aman*, *Sejanus*, *Stilico*, *Borgia*, with many like occurring in ſtory) are not only ſupplanted in their wicked contrivances, but diſmally chaſtiſed for them. Theſe occurrences do more then inſinuate Divine wiſdom to intervene, countermining and confounding ſuch devices. For he it is who (as the Scripture tells us) *maketh the Diviners mad*; *turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſh*; *diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hands cannot perform their enterprize*; *taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs, and turneth down the counſel of the froward headlong.*

Ruffinus, S. Paul, d' Ancre, de Luna, &c. Iſa. 44. 25. Job. 5. 12, 13. (Pſal. 33. 10.) Βαλλω πολυπλοκων ιξις.

When-ever a juſt cauſe, or honeſt deſign, without any ſupport or ſuccour of worldly means, (without authority, power, wit, learning, eloquence,) doth againſt all oppoſition of violence and art prevail: this ſignifieth him to yield a ſpecial countenance and aid thereto, who (to depreſs

preſs humane pride, and advance his own glory) *hath*
1 Cor. 1. 27, 28. *choſen the fooliſh things of the world, to confound the wiſe; and the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are:* (that are with us in moſt requeſt and eſteem.)

Again, when Plots, with extream caution and ſecrecy contrived in darkneſs, are by improbable means, by unaccountable accidents diſcloſed and brought to light: *a bird of the air* (as the *wiſe man* ſpeaketh) *telling the matter;* Eccles 10. 20. *the ſtones in the wall* (as it is in the Prophet) *crying out* Hab. 2. 11. Treaſon. The King cannot ſleep; to divert him the Chronicle is called for; *Mordecai*'s ſervice is there pitched on; an inquiry is made concerning his recompence; honour is decreed him: ſo doth *Aman*'s cruel device come out. Pity ſeiſeth on a pitileſs heart toward one among a huge number of innocents devoted to ſlaughter; that he may be ſaved, a Letter muſt be ſent; in that, words inſerted ſuggeſting the manner of execution; that carried to the wiſe King, who preſently ſmelleth it out: ſo This day's Plot was diſcovered. Such events, whence can they well proceed, but from the all-piercing and ever-watchful (Pſal 121. 4.) care of him, *whoſe eyes* (as *Elihu* ſaith) *are upon the ways* Job 34. 21. *of man, and he ſeeth all his goings? There is no darkneſs, nor* Job 34. 22. *ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity ſhall hide* Job 26. 6. *themſelves:* For *Hell is naked before him, and deſtruction* Pſa. 132. 2, &c. *hath no covering.* Heb. 4. 13.

Amm. 9. 2. Alſo, when ill men by their perverſe wilineſs do notably befool and enſnare themſelves, laying trains to blow up their own deſigns, involving themſelves in that ruine and miſchief into which they ſtudied to draw others; as 1 Sam. 18. 25. when *Saul*, expoſing *David*'s life to hazzard, encreaſeth his honour; when the *Perſian* Nobles incenſing the King againſt

againſt *Daniel*, do occaſion his growth in ſavour, with their own deſtruction; when *Aman*, by contriving to deſtroy God's people, doth advance them, and rearing a gallows for *Mordecai*, doth prepare it for himſelf: when it happeneth according to thoſe paſſages in the Pſalms, *The wicked are taken in the devices that they imagined*; *In the net which they hid is their own foot taken*; *He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made*; *His miſchief ſhall return upon his own head, and his violent dealings ſhall come upon his own pate.* Theſe are pregnant evidences of God's juſt and wiſe Providence: for, *the Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth*; *the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hand.*

Dan. 6. 24.

Pſal. 10. 2. & 9. 15. & 35. 8. & 140. 9. & 7. 15. & 57. 6. & 7. 16. & 5. 10.

Pſal. 9. 2.

All ſuch occurrences containing in them ſomewhat, if not down-rightly miraculous, yet very admirable, in like manner deflecting from the ſtream of humane affairs, as miracles do ſurmount the courſe of nature, moſt reaſonably may, moſt juſtly ſhould be aſcribed to the ſpecial operation of him, who *only doeth wonderful things.*

Pſal. 72. 18. & 86. 10.

2. Another character of ſpecial Providence is, the Seaſonableneſs, and Suddenneſs of Events. When that which in it ſelf is not ordinary, nor could well be expected, doth fall out happily, in the nick of an exigency, for the relief of innocence, the encouragement of goodneſs, the ſupport of a good cauſe, the furtherance of any good purpoſe; (ſo that there is occaſion to acknowledge with the Prophet, *Thou didſt terrible things, that we looked not for:*) This is a ſhrewd indication, that God's Hand is then concerned; not onely the event being notable, but the connexion thereof with circumſtances of need being more admirable.

Iſa. 64. 3.

Thus in time of diſtreſs and deſpondency, when a man is utterly forlorn, and deſtitute of all viſible relief, when

Pſal. 142. 4. (Pſal. 44. 25. & 108. 12.) *Heb. 4. 16.

when (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh) *refuge faileth him, and no man careth for his ſoul*; if then * εὐκαίρῳ βοήθεια, *an opportune ſuccour* doth arrive; he is then unreaſonable, and ingrateful, if he doth not avow a ſpecial Providence, and thankfully aſcribe that event unto him who is *our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble*; * *a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat*; ‖ *the hope of Iſrael, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.* This is that, for which in the 107 *Pſalm* the Divine Goodneſs is ſo magnificently celebrated; this is the burden of that pathetical rapture, wherein we by repeated wiſhes and exhortations are inſtigated to bleſs God; his wonderfully relieving the children of men in their need and diſtreſs: this is that, which God himſelf in the Prophet repreſenteth as a moſt ſatisfactory demonſtration of his Providence. *When the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt; I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forſake them: I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midſt of the valleys,* &c. *That they may ſee, and know, and conſider, and underſtand together, that the Hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy one of Iſrael hath created it.*

Pſal. 46. 1. & 9. 9. & 44. 24. & 37. 29. & 27. 5. & 69. 14. & 18. 6. * Iſa. 25. 4. & 33. 2. ‖ Jer. 14. 8. Job. 33. 18.

Pſal. 107. 8, 15, 21, 31.

Iſa. 41. 17, &c.

So alſo, when peſtilent enterprizes (managed by cloſe fraud, or by impetuous violence) are brought to a head, and come near to the point of being executed; the ſudden detection, or ſeaſonable obſtruction of them, do argue the ever-vigilant Eye, and the all-powerful Hand to be engaged. God ever doth ſee thoſe deceitful workers of iniquity, laying their miſchief in the dark; he is always preſent at their Cabals, and clandeſtine meetings, wherein they brood upon it. He often doth ſuffer it to grow on to a pitch of maturity, till it be thoroughly formed,

formed, till it be ready to be hatched, and break forth in its miſchievous effects; then in a trice he ſnappeth and cruſheth it to nothing. God beholdeth violent men ſetting out in their unjuſt attempts, he letteth them proceed on in a full career, until they reach the edge of their deſign; then inſtantly he checketh, putteth in a ſpoak, he ſtoppeth, he tumbleth them down, or turneth them backward. Thus was *Aman*'s plot daſhed, when he had procured a Royal Decree, when he had fixed a time, when he had iſſued forth letters to deſtroy God's people. Thus was *Pharaoh* overwhelmed, when he had juſt overtaken the children of *Iſrael*. Thus were the deſigns of *Abimelech*, of *Abſalom*, of *Adonijah*, of *Sanballat* nipped. Thus when *Sennacherib* with an unmatchable hoſt had encamped againſt *Jeruſalem*, and had to appearance ſwallowed it, God did *put a hook into his noſe, and turned him back into his own land.* Thus when *Antiochus* was marching on furiouſly, to accompliſh his threat of turning *Jeruſalem* into a Charnel, a noiſom diſeaſe did intercept his progreſs. Thus when the prophane *Caligula* did mean to diſcharge his bloody rage on the *Jews*, for refuſing to worſhip him, a domeſtick ſword did preſently give vent to his revengefull breath. Thus alſo, when *Julian* had by his Policy and his Authority projected to overthrow our Religion, his Plot ſoon was quaſhed, and his life ſnapped away by an unknown hand. Thus, *when-ever the enemy doth come in like a flood*, (threatning immediately to overflow, and overturn all things) *the Spirit of the Lord doth lift up a ſtandard againſt him*; that is, God's ſecret efficacy doth ſuddenly reſtrain and repreſs his outrage. This uſually is the method of Divine Providence. God could prevent the * beginnings of wicked deſigns; he could ſupplant them in their firſt onſets;

Eſth. 3.

Exod. 14.

2 King. 9. 28.

2 Mac. 9. 4.

Joſeph. 18. 12.

Chryſoſt. *in Babylam, Orat.* 2.

Naz. *Orat.* 4.

Iſa. 59. 19.

(Job 38. 11.)

* Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐκ προοιμίων μηδὲ εὐθέως ἔθος αὐτῷ τοιοῦτον, &c. *vid* Chryſ. *ad* Olymp.

ſets; he could any-where ſufflaminate and ſubvert them: but he rather winketh for a time, and ſuffereth the designers to go on, till they are ‖ mounted to the top of confidence, and good people are caſt on the brink of ruine; then * ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, ſurpriſingly, unexpectedly he ſtriketh in with effectual ſuccour: ſo declaring how vain the preſumption is of impious undertakers; how needfull and ſure his protection is over innocent people; how much reaſon the one hath to dread him, and the other to confide in him. Then is God ſeen, then his care and power will be acknowledged, when he ſnatcheth us from the jaws of danger, when *our ſoul doth ſcape as a bird out of the ſnare of the fowler.*

‖ ὅταν κερυφωθῇ, ὅταν ἐξηθῇ, &c. Ibid.

* *Nec Deus interſit, niſi dignus vindice nodus inciderit.*

Pſal. 124. 7.

3. Another character of ſpecial Providence is, the great Utility and Beneficialneſs of Occurrences, eſpecially in regard to the publick ſtate of things, and to great perſonages, in whoſe welfare the publick is much concerned. To entitle every petty chance that arriveth to ſpecial Providence, may ſignifie lightneſs; to father on God the miſchiefs iſſuing from our ſin and folly, may ſavour of profaneneſs: but to aſcribe every grand and beneficial event unto his good Hand, hath ever been reputed wiſdom and juſtice. * *It hath been* (ſaith *Balbus* in *Cicero*) *a common opinion among the Ancients, that whatever did bring great benefit to mankind, was never done without Divine goodneſs toward men.* And well might they deem ſo, ſeeing to doe ſo is moſt agreeable to his nature, and appertaining to his charge; and may appear to be ſo by good argumentation *à priori*. For, that God doth govern our affairs, may be deduced from his eſſential Attributes; and, conſequently, that he doth in eſpecial manner order theſe things, which are the moſt proper and worthy objects of his governance. God indeed doth not

Magna dii curant, parva negligunt. Cic. 2. *de N. D.*

* *Quicquid magnam utilitatem generi adferret humano, id non ſine Divina bonitate erga homines fieri arbitrabantur.* Cic. *de Nat. Deor. lib.* 2.

not diſregard any thing; he watcheth over the leaſt things by his general and ordinary Providence; ſo that nothing in nature may deviate from its courſe, or tranſgreſs the bounds preſcribed to it. He thereby *cloathes the graſs of the field*; *He provideth for the raven his food, and the young lions ſeek their meat from him*; without his care * *a ſparrow doth not fall to the ground*; by it *all the hairs of our head are numbred.* But his more ſpecial hand of Providence is chiefly imployed in managing affairs of great moment and benefit to mankind; and peculiarly thoſe which concern his people, who do profeſs to worſhip and ſerve him; whoſe welfare he tendreth with more then ordinary care and affection. He therefore hath a main ſtroke in all revolutions and changes of State: he preſideth in all great counſels, and undertakings; in the waging of war, in the ſettlement of peace; in the diſpenſation of victory and good ſucceſs. He is peculiarly intereſted in the protection of Princes, the chief *Miniſters of his Kingdom*; and in preſervation of his people, the choice object of his care, from violent invaſions, and treacherous ſurpriſes; ſo as to prevent diſaſters incident, or to deliver from them. *It is he that* (as the Pſalmiſt ſaith) *doth give ſalvation unto Kings; who delivereth David his ſervant from the hurtful ſword.* It is he that continually * *keepeth Iſrael without ever ſleeping, or ſlumbering*; who is *the hope of Iſrael, and the Saviour thereof*; who *is in the midſt of her, that ſhe ſhall not be moved*; who hath declared, that *he will help her, and that right early*; that *he will not caſt off his people, nor forſake his inheritance*; that *no weapon formed againſt* his Church *ſhall proſper*; that *ſalvation belongeth to the Lord, and his bleſſing is upon his people.* When therefore any remarkable event, highly conducing to the publick good of Church or

Mat. 6. 30. Pſal. 104. 14. Pſal. 147. 9. Job 38. 39. Pſal. 104. 21. *Mat. 10. 29, 30.

Dan. 4 25. Pſal. 75. 7.

Pſal. 46. 9. Prov. 21. 31. 1 Chron. 29. 11. Sap. 6. 4.

Pſal. 144. 10. Eccleſ 10. 20. Pſal. 18. 50. & 21. 1. & 33. 16. * Pſal. 121. 4. Jer. 14. 8. Pſal. 46. 5. Pſal. 94. 14. Iſa. 54. 17. Pſal. 3. 8.

State, (ſupporting them in a good condition, or reſcuing them from imminent danger,) doth appear, it is moſt reaſonable and moſt juſt, to aſcribe the accompliſhment thereof to God's Hand. When any pernicious enterprize, levelled againſt the ſafety of Prince and people, is diſappointed, it is fit we ſhould profeſs and ſay, *The righteous Lord hath hewen the ſnares of the ungodly in pieces.*

Pſal. 129. 4. (Q. T.)

4. Another like mark of ſpecial Providence is, the Righteouſneſs of the Caſe, or the advantage ſpringing from events unto the maintenance of Right, the vindication of Innocence, the defence of Truth, the encouragement of Piety and Vertue. God naturally is the Judge of Right, the Guardian of Innocence, the Patron of Truth, and Promoter of Goodneſs. *The Lord is a refuge to the oppreſſed: He is a Father of the fatherleſs, and a Judg of the Widow: He will maintain the cauſe of the afflicted, and the right of the poor:* * *He executeth righteouſneſs, and judgment for all that are oppreſſed: He bleſſeth the righteous, and compaſſeth him with favour as with a ſhield: He preſerveth the ſouls of the righteous, and delivereth them out of the hand of the ungodly: All his Paths are mercy and truth, unto ſuch as keep his Covenant and his Teſtimonies.* When-ever therefore Right is oppreſſed, or perilouſly invaded; when Innocence is groſsly abuſed, or ſorely beſet; when Piety is fiercely oppoſed, or cunningly undermined; when good men for the profeſſion of Truth, or the practice of Vertue, are perſecuted, or grievouſly threatned with miſchief: then may we preſume that God is not unconcerned, nor will prove backward to reach forth his ſuccour. And when accordingly we find that ſignal aid or deliverance do then arrive, it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God particularly hath engaged himſelf, and exerted his power in their behalf. For,

Pſal. 9. 9. Pſal. 68. 5. Pſal. 10. 14. Job 36. 15. Pſal. 140. 12. * Pſal. 103. 6. & 9. 8. Pſal. 5. 12. Pſal. 97. 10. & 37. 12— Pſal. 25. 10. & 146. 6.

For, ſeeing it is his proper and peculiar work, ſeeing it moſt becometh and behoveth him to appear in ſuch [illegible] affording his helpful countenance; when he doth [illegible], we ſhould be ready to acknowledge it. In ſuch a caſe, *The hand of the Lord ſhall be known toward his ſervants, and his indignation toward his enemies*, ſaith the Prophet. Iſa. 66. 14.

5. Another character is, the Correſpondence of Events to the Prayers and deſires of good men. For ſeeing it is the duty, and conſtant practice of good men, in all exigencies to implore God's help; ſeeing ſuch Prayers have, as S. *James* telleth us, a mighty energy, it being God's property, by them to be moved to impart his powerful aſſiſtence; ſeeing God moſt plainly and frequently hath declared, and obliged himſelf by promiſe, that he will hear them, ſo as to perform what-ever is expedient in their behalf; ſeeing we have many notable experiments recorded in Scripture (as thoſe of *Aſa*, *Jehoſhaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Elias*, *Daniel*, and the like) of Prayers bringing down wonderful effects from Heaven, with which the teſtimonies of all times, and the daily experience of good men do conſpire; ſeeing the preſumption of ſuch efficacy is the main ground and encouragement of Devotion, we have great reaſon, when-ever Events are anſwerable to ſuch Prayers, to aſcribe the performance of them to God's Hand: great reaſon we have in ſuch caſes to cry out with *David*, *Now know I that the Lord ſaveth his Anointed; he will hear him from his holy Heaven, with the ſaving ſtrength of his right hand:* juſt cauſe have we, according to his pattern, thankfully to acknowledge God's favour in anſwering our petitions;

Pſal. 69 13— & 102. 1, 2. & 140 6. & 60. 10. & 56. 1— Jam. 5. 16. Pſal. 56. 9. Pſal. 34. 15. & 91. 15. & 145. 18.

2 Chron. 14. 11. & 20. 9. & 32. 20 2 Kings 19. 15. 1 Kings 17. 1, &c.

Πόσαι μυριάδες ἀνδρῶν καὶ φάλαγγες, ὅσας ἱκετεύοντες μόνον ἡμεῖς καὶ Θεὸς βουλοῦ θεὶς κατειργάσατο;
Naz. *Orat.* 4.

How many myriads and ſquadrons of men were there, whom we only praying, and God willing, diſcomfited? ſaith Nazianzen *in reference to the defeating of* Julian's *deſign.*

Pſal. 20. 6.

Psal. 21. 1, 2. titions; *The King* (said he) *shall joy in thy strength, O Lord, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoyce?* Psal. 30. 2. & 66. 17---- & 118. 5. *For thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the requests of his lips.*

6. Again, The proceedings of God (especially in way of judgment, or of dispensing rewards and punishments) discover their original by their kind and countenance, which usually do bear a near resemblance, or some significant correspondence to the actions upon which they are grounded. *Punishments* (saith a Father) *are the forced off-springs of willing faults:* and answerably, Rewards are the children of good deeds: and God, who formeth both, doth commonly order it so, that the children in their complexion and features, shall resemble their Parents. So that the deserts of men shall often be legible in the recompences conferred, or inflicted on them: not according to the natural result of their practice, but with a comely reference thereto; apt to raise in them a sense of God's Hand, and to wring from them an acknowledgment of his Equity in so dealing with them. So when humble Modesty is advanced to honour, and ambitious Confidence is thrown into disgrace; when Liberality is blessed with encrease, and Avarice is cursed with decay of estate; when Craft incurreth disappointment, and Simplicity findeth good success; when haughty Might is shattered, and helpless Innocence is preserved; when the Calumnious tongue is blistered, the *Flattering lips are cut off*, the Blasphemous throat is torn out; when bloody Oppressours have *blood given them to drink*, and come to welter in their own gore; (an accident which almost continually doth happen;) when Treacherous men by their own Confidents, or by themselves are betrayed; when Retaliations of vengeance are ministred, ex-

Ἑκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα. Damasc.

Τῆς κολάσεως ὁ τρόπος τῆς ἁμαρτίας τὸν τρόπον μιμεῖται Chrys. ἀνδρ. 19.

Psal. 12. 3. Rev. 16. 6.

extorting confeſſions, like to that of *Adoni-bezek*, *As I have done, ſo God hath requited me*; deſerving ſuch exprobrations, as that of *Samuel* to *Agag*, *As thy ſword hath made women childleſs, ſo ſhall thy mother be childleſs among women*; grounding ſuch reflexions as that concerning *Antiochus*, *Thus the murtherer and blaſphemer having ſuffered moſt grievouſly, as he entreated other men, ſo died he a miſerable death*: By ſuch Occurrences the finger of God doth point out and indicate it ſelf; they ſpeak themſelves immediately to come from that juſt God, who doth ἀνταποδιδόναι, render to men anſwerably to their doings; who payeth men their due, ſometimes in value, often *in ſpecie*, according to the ſtricteſt way of reckoning. *He* (as the Prophet ſaith) *is great in counſel, and mighty in work: for his eyes are open to all the ways of the ſons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings.* This indeed is a ſort of adminiſtration moſt conformable to God's exact juſtice, and moſt conducible to his holy deſigns of inſtructing and correcting offenders. He therefore hath declared it to be his way. *It is* (ſaith the Prophet, directing his ſpeech to the inſtruments of Divine vengeance upon *Babylon*) *the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her; as ſhe hath done, do unto her.* And, *The day of the Lord* (ſaith another Prophet concerning the like judgment upon *Edom*) *is near upon all the Heathen. As thou haſt done, it ſhall be done unto thee; thy reward ſhall return upon thine own head.* Thereby doth God mean to declare himſelf the Judge, and Governour of men: For, *I will*, ſaith he in *Ezekiel*, *do unto them after their way, and according to their deſerts will I judge them; and they ſhall know that I am the Lord.* Farther,

Judges 1. 7. 1 Sam. 15. 33. 2 Mac. 9. 28. Luke 14. 12. Rom. 12. 19. Jer. 32. 19. Pſal 62. 12. Jer. 50. 15. & 51. 49. Obad. 15. Ezek. 35. 15. Ezek. 7 27. Job 34. 11.

7. Another argument of ſpecial Providence is, the Har-

Harmonious conſpiracy of various Accidents to one End or Effect. If that one thing ſhould hit advantageouſly to the production of ſome conſiderable Event, it may with ſome plauſibility be attributed to Fortune, or common Providence: yet that divers things, having no dependence, or coherence one with the other, in divers places, through ſeveral times, ſhall all joyn their forces to compaſs it, cannot well otherwiſe then be aſcribed to God's ſpecial Care wiſely directing, to his own Hand powerfully wielding thoſe concurrent inſtruments to one good purpoſe. For it is beſide the nature, it is beyond the reach of Fortune, to range various cauſes in ſuch order. Blind Fortune cannot apprehend or catch the ſeaſons and junctures of things, which ariſe from the motions of cauſes in their nature indifferent and arbitrary: to it therefore no ſuch event can reaſonably be imputed. So to the bringing about our Lord's Paſſion, (that great Event, which is ſo particularly aſſigned to God's Hand,) we may obſerve the monſtrous Treachery of *Judas*, the ſtrange Malignity of the *Jewiſh* Rulers, the prodigious Levity of the People, the wonderful Eaſineſs of *Pilate*, with other notable accidents, to have jumped in order thereto. So alſo that a malicious Traitour ſhould conceive kindneſs toward any, that he ſhould be miſtaken in the object of his favour, that he ſhould expreſs his mind in a way ſubject to deliberate examination, in terms apt to breed ſuſpicion where the Plot was laid; that the Counſellours ſhould deſpiſe it, and yet not ſmother it; that the King inſtantly, by a light darted into his mind, ſhould deſcry it: theſe things ſo happily meeting, may argue God (who mouldeth the hearts, who guideth the hands, who enlightneth the minds of men) to have been engaged in the detection of this day's black Conſpiracy.

--ἃ κ̅τ̅ τ̅ τ̅ Θεοῦ μαρτύρων πρῶτος ἐφεῦρε κολαστήρια, ταῦθ' ὑπομείναντα δικαιοτάτῃ ψήφῳ. Euſeb. *lib. I. de Vit.* Conſt. *de* Maximino (*ſub finem.*) *Is oculos qui erucrat Chriſtianis, ipſe riſu orbatus.*

Such

Such are ſome characters of ſpecial Providence: each of which ſingly appearing in any occurrence, would in a conſiderate man breed an opinion thereof; each of them being very congruous to the ſuppoſition of it; no ſuch appearances being otherwiſe ſo clearly and cleverly explicable, as by aſſigning the Divine Hand for their principal cauſe. But the connexion of them all in one Event (when divers odd accidents do befal at a ſeaſonable time, according to exigency for the publick benefit, the preſervation of Princes, the ſecurity of God's People, the protection of Right, the maintenance of Truth and Piety, according to the wiſhes and prayers of good men, with proper retribution and vengeance upon the wretched deſigners of miſchief; ſuch a complication, I ſay, of theſe marks in one Event) may throughly ſuffice to raiſe a firm perſuaſion, to force a confident acknowledgment concerning God's Providence, in any conſiderate and ingenuous perſon: it readily will diſpoſe ſuch perſons upon any ſuch occaſion to ſay, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

Vid. Diod. Sic. *lib.* 15. *p.* 482.

Pſal. 118. 23.

Notwithſtanding therefore any obſcurity or intricacy that ſometime may appear in the courſe of Providence, notwithſtanding any general exceptions that may by perverſe incredulity be alleged againſt the conduct of things, there are good marks obſervable, whereby (if we are not very blockiſh, drowzy, ſupine, lazy, or froward; if we will conſider wiſely, with induſtrious attention and care, with minds pure from vain prejudices, and corrupt affections) we may diſcern and underſtand God's doing. Which to do is the Firſt Duty ſpecified in our Text: upon which having inſiſted ſo largely, I ſhall (hoping you will favour me with a little patience) briefly touch the reſt.

Εἰ μὴ σημεῖα καὶ θαύματα, ἀλλ' ἐοικότα σημείοις πράγματα, δείγματα τῆς Θεοῦ προνοίας, καὶ ἀντιλήψεως ἀφάτου. Chryſ. *ad Olymp. Ep.* 1.

II. It is the Duty of us all, upon ſuch remarkable occurrences of Providence, to *fear* God: *All men*, 'tis ſaid, *ſhall fear*. It is our Duty in ſuch caſes to be affected with all ſorts of fear; with a fear of awful dread, with a fear of hearty reverence, with a fear of ſober caution; yea, ſometimes with a fear of dejecting conſternation. When God doth appear *clad with his robes of vengeance and zeal*, denouncing and diſcharging judgment; when he repreſenteth himſelf *fearful in praiſes, terrible in his doings toward the children of men, working terrible things in righteouſneſs*; it ſhould ſtrike into our hearts a dread of his glorious Majeſty, of his mighty Power, of his ſevere Juſtice, of *his glorious and fearful Name*: it ſhould inſtil into our minds a reverence of his excellent Wiſdom, his exceeding Goodneſs, his perfect Holineſs: it ſhould breed in our Souls a ſolicitous care of diſpleaſing and provoking him: it ſhould cauſe us in our hearts to ſhake and tremble before him. Then is that of the Pſalmiſt to be put in practice, *Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the World ſtand in awe of him. Tremble thou Earth at the preſence of the Lord, at the preſence of the God of Jacob.* Such diſpenſations are in their nature declarative of thoſe Divine Attributes which do require ſuch affections: they are ſet before our eyes to caſt us into a very ſerious and ſolemn frame; to abaſh, and deter us from offending; by obſerving the danger of incurring puniſhments like to thoſe which we behold inflicted upon preſumptuous tranſgreſſors; upon thoſe who do hainouſly violate Right, or furiouſly impugn Truth, or profanely deſpiſe Piety; who earneſtly proſecute wicked Enterpriſes; who perſecute the Friends of God with outrageous violence, or treacherous ſubtilty. Upon inflictiOn of ſuch puniſhments, *All the people ſhall hear, and fear, and*

Job 37. 22.... & 13. 11.
Pſal. 52. 6. & 68. 35.
Dan. 6. 26.
Iſa. 59. 17.
Exod. 15. 11.
Pſal. 66. 3, 5. & 65. 5. (130. 3.)
Deut. 28. 58. & 10. 17.
Iſa. 66. 2.
Pſal. 33. 8.
Pſal. 114. 7.
Deut. 17. 13. & 13. 11. & 19. 20.

and do no more preſumptuouſly, ſaith God himſelf, declaring the nature and drift of them. They do plainly demonſtrate, that there is no preſuming to eſcape, being detected in our cloſe Machinations by God's All-ſeeing Eye; being defeated in our bold Attempts by God's All-mighty Hand; being ſorely chaſtiſed for our Iniquity by God's impartial Judgment. Extreamly blind and ſtupid therefore muſt we be, or monſtrouſly ſturdy and profane, if ſuch experiments of Divine Power and Juſtice do not awe us, and fright us from ſin. *When the Lion roareth, who will not fear? when the trumpet is blown in the City, ſhall not the people be afraid?* Shall he, *at* whom *the mountains quake, and the hills melt*; whoſe *indignation the Nations are not able to abide*; *at* whoſe *wrath the Earth doth ſhake and tremble*; *at* whoſe *reproof the pillars of Heaven are aſtoniſhed*; ſhall he viſibly frown, ſhall his wrath flame out, ſhall he ſhake his rod of exemplary Vengeance over us, and we ſtand void of ſenſe or fear? If ſo, then ſurely a brutiſh dotage, or a Gigantick ſtoutneſs doth poſſeſs us.

Hoſ. 11. 10. Amos 3. 6, 8. Nah. 1. 5. Jer. 10. 10. Pſal. 104. 32. & 18. 7. & 76. 8. & 143. 2. Job 26. 11. (Iſa. 64. 3. Ezek. 21. 10. Iſa. 25. 3. & 59. 18, 19.)

III. We are in ſuch caſes obliged to *declare God's work*: that is, openly to acknowledge and avow, to applaud and celebrate the ſpecial Providence of God, with his adorable perfections diſplayed in ſuch Events; to the glory of God's Name, in expreſſion of our reverence and gratitude toward him, for the common edification of men; for which uſes they greatly ſerve, to which purpoſes they are deſigned. We ſhould not view ſuch providential occurrences, like dumb beaſts, with a dull or careleſs ſilence, as if we did not mind them, or were not concerned in them: we ſhould not ſuppreſs or ſtifle the knowledge of them in our breaſts, as if they were barely matters of private conſideration and uſe: we ſhould not

let our obſervation and reſentment of them be fruitleſs, ſo as to yield no honour to God, no benefit to man. But we ſhould propagate and convey them into others: in ſo loud a tone, in ſo lively a ſtrain we ſhould vent them, as thereby to excite the notice, to enflame the affections of all men within the reach of our voice; provoking them to conſpire with us in acknowledgment of God's Power and Wiſdom, in acclamation to his Juſtice and Goodneſs. This is the due improvement of our *Glory*; that peculiar excellency, wherein chiefly (except in our Reaſon) we do ſurpaſs all creatures; that without which our Reaſon it ſelf is more then half unprofitable; that whereby we put our beſt Member to its beſt uſe. For this we have the devout Pſalmiſt his pious Reſolutions, his exemplary Performances, his zealous Wiſhes, his earneſt Exhortations to guide and move us. *I will ſpeak of the glorious honour of thy Majeſty, and of thy wondrous works. Men ſhall ſpeak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatneſs. They ſhall ſpeak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power.* So did he ſignifie his Reſolution. *I have not hid thy righteouſneſs within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindneſs and thy Truth from the great Congregation.* So his conſcience teſtified of his Practice. *Oh that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of men: that they would offer the ſacrifice of thanksgiving, and declare his works with gladneſs.* So doth he pour forth his Deſire. *O clap your hands, all ye people, ſhout unto God with the voice of triumph. Sing unto the Lord, bleſs his Name: ſhew forth his ſalvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the Heathen, his wonders among all people. Come and ſee the works of God— Sing forth the honour of his Name, make his Praiſe glorious.*

Pſal. 57. 8.

Pſal. 145. 5, 6, 11. (& 77. 12. & 9. 14.)

Pſal. 40 10.

Pſal. 107. 8, 15, 21, 22, 31.

Pſal 47. 1.

Pſal. 96 2, 3.

Pſal. 96. 3. & 105. 2.

Pſal. 66 5, 2. (Pſal. 66. 16.)

O

O give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his Name; make known his deeds among the people. So doth he ſummon, ſo doth he urge us to this practice; and in his deportment we may ſee our Duty. Pſal. 105. 1.

IV. It is peculiarly the Duty and practice of good men upon ſuch occaſions to feel, and to expreſs religious Joy. *The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord.* Good men indeed then have great matter, and much cauſe, on many accounts to be glad.

It becometh them to rejoyce, as having an univerſal complacence in God's proceedings, as gratefully reliſhing all diſpenſations of Providence. They, as pious, are diſpoſed to bleſs and praiſe God for all things incident, and cannot therefore but rejoyce; Joy being an inſeparable companion of Gratitude, and Praiſe. Hence, *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart.* Pſal. 97. 11. Hence, *The voice of ſalvation and rejoycing is in the tabernacles of the righteous.* Hence, *Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praiſe is comely for the upright*; is an exhortation backed with a very good reaſon. Pſal. 118. 15. Pſal. 33. 1.

They cannot but find ſatisfaction in obſerving God's Providence notably diſcovered, to the confirmation of their faith, and cheriſhing their hopes; together with the conviction of infidelity, and confuſion of profaneneſs. *Our heart* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſhall rejoyce in him; becauſe we have truſted in his Holy Name. I have truſted in thy mercy, my heart ſhall rejoyce in thy ſalvation. The righteous ſhall ſee it, and rejoyce; and all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth.* Pſal. 33. 21. Pſal. 13. 5. Pſal. 107. 42.

It is to them no ſmall pleaſure, to behold God's holy Perfections illuſtriouſly ſhining forth; and the Glory of him (who is the principal object of their love, their reverence, their hope and confidence) to be conſpicuouſly advan-

advanced. *Rejoyce*, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *O ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs.* Pſal. 97. 12. & 30. 4. *Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoyced, becauſe of thy judgments, O Lord. For thou, Lord, art high above all the Earth.* Pſal. 97. 8, 9. & 48. 11.

It is to them ground of exceeding comfort, to receive ſo clear pledges of God's Love and Favour, his Truth and Fidelity, his Bounty and Munificence toward them, expreſſed in ſuch watchful care over them, ſuch protection in dangers, ſuch aid in needs, ſuch deliverance from miſchiefs vouchſafed to them. *Such Benefits they cannot receive from God's hand, without that chearfulneſs which always doth adhere to gratitude. *Sen. de Benef. 2. 22. Cùm accipiendum judicaverimus, hilares accipiamus, profitentes gaudium, &c. *Vid.* ib. 30.

I will (ſaith *David*) *ſing unto the Lord, becauſe he hath dealt bountifully with me.* Pſal. 13. 6. *Becauſe thou haſt been my helper, therefore in the ſhadow of thy wings I will rejoyce.* Pſal. 63. 7. *My lips ſhall greatly rejoyce in thee, and my Soul, which thou haſt redeemed.* Pſal 71. 23. *I will be glad, and rejoyce in thy mercy: for thou haſt conſidered my trouble, and haſt known my Soul in adverſities.* Pſal. 31. 7. *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* Pſal. 126. 3. *Let all thoſe that put their truſt in thee rejoyce: let them ever ſhout for joy, becauſe thou defendeſt them— ——.* Pſal. 5. 11.

They are alſo greatly refreſhed with apprehenſion of the happy fruits ſprouting from ſuch diſpenſations of Providence; ſuch as are the Benefit of mankind, the Peace and proſperity of the Civil State, the Preſervation, ſettlement, enlargement, advancement of God's Church, the ſupport of Right, the ſuccour of Innocence, the maintenance of Truth, the encouragement and furtherance of Piety; the reſtraint of Violence, the diſcountenance of Errour, the correction of Vice and Impiety. In theſe things they, as faithful ſervants of God, and real friends of Goodneſs, as bearing hearty good will

will and compaſſion to mankind, as true lovers of their Country, as living and ſenſible members of the Church, cannot but rejoyce. Seeing by theſe things their own beſt intereſt, (which is no other then the advantage of Goodneſs) their chief honour, (which conſiſts in the promotion of Divine Glory,) their trueſt content, (which is placed in the proſperity of *Sion*,) are highly furthered; how can they look on them ſpringing up without great delight and complacence? *O* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſing unto the Lord — for he hath done marvellous things — He hath remembred his mercy and truth toward the houſe of Iſrael: all the ends of the earth have ſeen the ſalvation of our God.* And, *Sing, O heavens*, (cryeth the Prophet) *and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into ſinging, O ye mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted.* And, *When* (ſaith he) *ye ſhall ſee this*, (the comfort of God's people) *your heart ſhall rejoyce; and your bones ſhall flouriſh like an herb, and the hand of the Lord ſhall be known toward his ſervants, and his indignation toward his enemies.*

Pſal. 122. 6. (1 Cor. 12. 26.) Pſal. 98. 1, 3. Iſa. 49. 13. Pſal. 96. 11, 13. Iſa. 66. 14.

Even in the fruſtration of wicked deſigns, attended with ſevere execution of Vengeance on the Contrivers and Abettours of them, they may have a pleaſant ſatisfaction; they muſt then yeild a chearful applauſe to Divine Juſtice. *The righteous* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſhall rejoyce when he ſeeth the Vengeance:* and, *Let the wicked* (ſaith he) *periſh at the preſence of God; but let the righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoyce.* Whence at God's infliction of Judgement upon *Babylon*, it is ſaid in *Jeremy*, *Then the heaven, and the earth, and all that is therein, ſhall ſing for Babylon*: and at the fall of Myſtical *Babylon*, in the *Apocalyps* 'tis likewiſe ſaid, *Rejoye over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apoſtles and Prophets;*

Pſal. 58. 10. Job 22. 19. Pſal. 68. 2, 3. Jer. 51. 48. Apoc. 18. 20.

Prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. Farther,

V. The next Duty preſcribed to good men in ſuch caſes is to *truſt in God:* that is, to have their affiance in God (upon all ſuch like occaſions, in all urgencies of need) ſettled, improved, and corroborated thereby. This indeed is the proper end, immediately regarding us, of God's ſpecial Providence, diſcloſing it ſelf in any miraculous, or in any remarkable way; to nouriſh in well-
(Pſal. 78. 7.) diſpoſed minds that Faith in God, which is the root of all Piety, and ground of Devotion. Such experiments are ſound arguments to perſuade good men, that God doth govern and order things for their beſt advantage; they are powerful incentives, driving them in all exigencies to ſeek God's help; they are moſt convincing evidences, that God is abundantly able, very willing, and ever ready to ſuccour them. *They*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *that know thy Name, will put their truſt in thee: for thou, Lord, haſt*
Pſal. 9. 10.
Pſal. 61 3,4,5. Pſal. 115. 9, &c. & 130. 7. *not forſaken them that ſeek thee.* And, *I* (ſaith he) *will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will truſt in the covert of thy wings: For thou, O God, haſt heard my vows; thou haſt been a ſhelter for me, and a ſtrong tower from the enemy.* It is, indeed, a great aggravation of diffidence in God,
Pſal. 34. 8. that having *taſted and ſeen that the Lord is good*; having felt ſo manifeſt experience of Divine goodneſs; having received ſo notable pledges of God's favourable inclination to help us; we yet will not rely upon him. As a friend, who by ſignal inſtances of kindneſs hath aſſured his good will, hath great cauſe of offence, if he be ſuſpected of unwillingneſs in a needful ſeaſon to afford his relief: ſo may God moſt juſtly be diſpleaſed, when we, (notwithſtanding ſo palpable demonſtrations of his kind-
Eccluſ. 2. 10. neſs) by diſtruſting him, do in effect queſtion the ſincerity

ty of his friendſhip, or the conſtancy of his goodneſs toward us.

VI. Good men upon ſuch occaſions ſhould *glory*: *All the upright in heart ſhall glory.* Should *glory*, that is, in contemplation of ſuch Providences, feeling ſprightly elevations of mind and tranſports of affection, they ſhould exhibit triumphant demonſtrations of ſatisfaction and alacrity. It becometh them not in ſuch caſes to be dumpiſh, or demure; but jocund and crank in their humour, briſk and gay in their looks, pleaſantly flippant and free in their ſpeech; jolly and debonair in their behaviour; every way ſignifying the extream complacency they take in God's doing, and the full content they taſte in their ſtate. They with ſolemn exultation ſhould triumph in ſuch events, as in victories atchieved by the glorious Hand of God in their behalf, in approbation of their cauſe, in favour toward their perſons, for their great benefit and comfort. They may (not as proudly aſſuming to themſelves the glory due to God, but as gratefully ſenſible of their felicity ſpringing from God's favour) *ſe jactare, ſe laudibus efferre*, (as the *Hebrew* word doth ſignifie;) that is, in a ſort boaſt, and commend themſelves as very happy in their relation to God, by virtue of his protection and aid. They may (not with a haughty inſolence, or wanton arrogance, but with a ſober confidence, and chearfulneſs) inſult upon baffled impiety, by their expreſſions and demeanour upbraiding the folly, the baſeneſs, the impotency, and wretchedneſs thereof, in competition with the wiſedom, in oppoſition to the power of God, their friend and patron. For ſuch carriage in ſuch caſes we have the practice and the advice of the Pſalmiſt, to warant and direct us. *In God*, ſaith he, *we boaſt all the day long, and praiſe thy Name for ever. Thou, Lord, haſt*

Pſal. 126. 1. &c.

Pſal. 52. 6, 7. *The righteous ſhall——laugh at him*, or *deride him*, in this manner; *Lo, this is the man that made not God his ſtrength——* Pſal. 44 8. Pſal. 92. 4.

made me glad through thy work; and I will triumph in the
Pſal. 20. 5. *works of thy hands. We will rejoyce in thy ſalvation; and in*
Pſal. 105. 3, 4. *the Name of our God we will ſet up our banners. Glory ye in his holy Name: let the heart of them rejoyce that ſeek the Lord. Sing unto him, ſing Pſalms unto him; talk ye of all his*
Pſal. 106. 47. *wondrous works. Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy Name, and to triumph in thy praiſe.* Such ſhould be the reſult (upon us) of God's merciful Diſpenſations towards his people.

I ſhall onely further remark, that the word here uſed is by the *Greek* rendred ἐπαινεθήσονται, *they ſhall be praiſed*: which ſenſe the Original will bear, and the reaſon of the caſe may admit. For ſuch Diſpenſations ever do adorn integrity, and yeild commendation to good men. They declare the wiſdom of ſuch perſons, in adhering to God, in repoſing upon God's help, in imbracing ſuch courſes which God doth approve and bleſs: they plainly
Pſal. 126. 3. & 125. 1, &c & 138. 1, &c. tell how dear ſuch perſons are to God; how incomparably happy in his favour, how impregnably ſafe under his protection; as having his infallible wiſedom, and his invincible power engaged on their ſide. This cannot but render them admirable, & their ſtate glorious in the eyes of all men; inducing them to profeſs with the Pſalmiſt,
Pſal. 144. 15. & 33. 12. *Happy is the people which is in ſuch a caſe; yea, happy is that people, whoſe God is the Lord.* And of ſuch a people, that
Pſal. 89. 16, 17. declaration from the ſame mouth is verified, *In thy Name ſhall they rejoyce all the day long, and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted: For thou art the glory of their ſtrength, and in thy favour their horn ſhall be exalted.*

Such are the Duties ſuggeſted in our Text, as ſuting theſe occaſions, when God in ſpecial manner hath vouchſafed to protect his people, or to reſcue them from imminent

nent miſchiefs, by violent aſſault or by fradulent contrivance levelled againſt them. I ſhould apply theſe particulars to the preſent Caſe ſolemnized by us: but I ſhall rather recommend the application to your ſagacity, then farther infringe your patience, by ſpending thereon ſo many words as it would exact. You do well know the Story, which by ſo many years repetition hath been impreſſed on your minds: and by reflecting thereon,

You will eaſily diſcern, how God, in the ſeaſonable diſcovery of this execrable Plot, (the maſter-piece of wicked machinations ever conceived in humane brain, or deviſed on this ſide Hell, ſince the foundation of things,) in the happy deliverance of our Nation and Church from the deſperate miſchiefs intended toward them, in the remarkable protection of Right and Truth, did ſignalize his Providence.

You will be affected with hearty Reverence toward the gracious Authour of our ſalvation, and with humble dread toward the juſt awarder of vengeance upon thoſe miſcreant wretches, who *digged this pit, and fell into it themſelves.*

You will be ready with pious acknowledgment and admiration of God's Mercy, his Juſtice, his Wiſedom, to declare and magnifie this notable Work done by him among us.

You muſt needs feel devout reſentments of Joy for the Glory ariſing to God, and the Benefits accruing to us, in the preſervation of God's Anointed our juſt Sovereign, with his Royal poſterity: in the freeing our Country from civil Broils, Diſorders, and Confuſions; from the yoaks of Uſurpation and ſlavery; from grievous Extortions and Rapines; from bloudy Perſecutions and Trials, with the like ſpawn of diſaſtrous and tragical con-

conſequences, by this Deſign threatned upon it: in upholding our Church (which was ſo happily ſettled, and had ſo long glorioufly flouriſhed) from utter ruine: in ſecuring our profeſſion of God's Holy Truth, the truly Catholick Faith of *Chriſt*, (refined from thoſe droſſy alloys, wherewith the rudeneſs and ſloth of blind Times, the fraud of ambitious and covetous Deſigners, the pravity of ſenſual and profane men had embaſed and corrupted it,) together with a pure Worſhip of God, an edifying adminiſtration of God's Word and Sacraments, a comly, wholſome, and moderate Diſcipline, conformable to Divine Preſcription, and Primitive example: in reſcuing us from having impious Errours, ſcandalous Practices, and ſuperſtitious Rites, with mercileſs violence obtruded upon us: in continuing therefore to us the moſt deſirable comforts and conveniences of our lives.

You further conſidering this ſignal teſtimony of Divine Goodneſs, will thereby be moved to hope and confide in God for his gracious preſervation from the like pernicious attemps, againſt the ſafety of our Prince, and welfare of our Country, againſt our Peace, our Laws, our Religion; eſpecially from *Romiſh* Zeal and Bigottry, (that mint of woful Factions and Combuſtions, of treaſonable Conſpiracies, of barbarous Maſſacres, of horrid Aſſaſſinations, of inteſtine Rebellions, of forrein Invaſions, of ſavage Tortures and Butcherics, of *holy Leagues*, and *pious Frauds*, through Chriſtendom, and particularly among us,) which as it without reaſon damneth, ſo it would by any means deſtroy all that will not crouch thereto.

You will in fine, with joyous feſtivity glory and triumph in this illuſtrious demonſtration of God's Favour to-

toward us; ſo as heartily to joyn in thoſe due acclamations of bleſſing and praiſe.

Bleſſed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth. Our ſoul is eſcaped as a bird out of the ſnare of the fowlers; the ſnare is broken, and we are eſcaped. Pſal. 124. 6. (& 68. 32.)

Allelujah; Salvation and glory, and power unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments. Apoc. 19. 1, 2.

Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy wayes, O thou King of Saints. Apoc. 15. 3.

Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who only doth wonderous things: And bleſſed be his glorious Name for ever: and let the the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen. Pſal. 72. 18, 19.

FINIS.